7th February 1924]

The hon. Mr. C. P. RAMASWAMI AYYAR :—"I repeat, Sir, again what I said before that if Dr. Varadarajulu Nayudu says that he did not intend anything like that, the Government will only be too anxious and willing in his own interest to accept his statement. We do not propose to lay the whole speech on the table because if the fact is challenged, further action may be necessary."

Mr. C. V. VENKATARAMANA AYYANGAR :—"My question is not answered, and that is, whether this is the only reference to Japan in the whole speech or whether there are other references to it. We are not at all concerned with what Dr. Varadarajulu may or may not do."

The hon. Mr. C. P. RAMASWAMI AYYAR :—"I can speak only from memory. I think there is another reference in this speech; but there are other references to Japan in other speeches."

Mr. C. RAMALINGA REDDI :—"In view of the fact that the Government themselves not being satisfied with the passage in which Japan occurs would not bear the peculiar construction put upon it, the Government say that they were strengthened in their construction of his speech by another speech in which the following passage is said to occur :—'Europeans come to India in the winter season. . . . then we must create some riots, etc. . .'. This does not seem necessarily to bear the interpretation that those riots should have any connexion with the Japanese invasion. Some other passages also are given. Would it not mean making a statement and then expecting him to disclaim it? Will the hon. the Law Member be pleased to say that on the evidence available, such an inference as was drawn was possible but that it is not irresistible?"

The hon. Mr. C. P. RAMASWAMI AYYAR :—"I am afraid I cannot disown what I said in view of this definite statement, namely, 'Some think that we must call Japan to our aid', that word 'us' includes himself. It is said 'then many of us will proceed with Purnakumbhams'. Purnakumbham is of religious significance and indicates a welcome. The passage also says 'What Japan is doing is right', that is crushing the British people."

Mr. C. RAMALINGA REDDI :—"In view of the fact that Dr. Varadarajulu Nayudu is an educated man who knows grammar he would not have said many of the words in the passages quoted."

The hon. the PRESIDENT :—"I am afraid the hon. Member is passing beyond the limits of a supplementary question."

Treatment of a certain member of the depressed classes.

241 Q.—Mr. R. VEERIAN : Will the hon. the Member for Revenue be pleased to state—

(a) whether it is a fact that a member of the depressed class was confined to the stocks in an obscure taluk of Trichinopoly from 10 to 2 o'clock by the village magistrate between the middle of October and the first week of November 1923;

(b) whether it is a fact that a petition was submitted to the Government by the President of the Depressed Classes Society, Trichinopoly, praying for an early removal of the objectionable form of punishment;

(c) whether it is a fact that the Government have already announced their intention to remove the above practice of village magistrates confining human beings in stocks; and

(d) if so, whether the Government will be pleased to furnish a copy of the Government Order?

A.—In November 1923, the Government received a representation from the President of the South Indian Depressed Classes Society in which it was alleged that one Mr. Seerangan had been confined in the stocks in a village called Bommanapadi in the Perambalur taluk of Trichinopoly district, some time in May last. This is presumably the case referred to, but if so the hon. Member appears to be wrong as to his dates. The Government were unable to discover the truth of the matter after such a long interval of time and informed the President of the Society accordingly. They have also informed the President that the punishment of confinement in the stocks was abolished by the Village Courts (Amendment) Act, 1919, and they have issued instructions more than once in the past to prevent the infliction of this form of punishment by those who are apparently not aware of the change in the law.

Condition of the beggars in Madras.

242 Q.—Mr. L. C. Guruswami: Will the hon. the Law Member be pleased to state—

(a) the number of beggars put up by the Madras Police before the Presidency Magistrates during the current year, and how many of them have been (i) fined, (ii) sent to jail and (iii) acquitted;

(b) what action the Government have taken to prohibit those beggars who have been discharged from further begging; and

(c) if they propose to start a work-house or a poor-house to put an end to the beggar nuisance in the City of Madras?

A.—(a) The number of beggars put up before the Presidency Magistrates during the year was 139

(i) The number of them fined was 88

(ii) ,, sent to jail was 39

(iii) ,, acquitted was 12

(b) & (c) No effective action can be taken in the absence of a beggars' home or poor-house, for which sufficient funds are not at present available.

Mr. Sami Venkatachalam Chettiyar:—"May I ask whether the Government propose to make any provision at least in the next Budget for either starting a work-house themselves or amply subventing the Corporation of Madras if one is started by that body?"

The hon. Mr. C. P. Ramaswami Ayyar:—"If the Corporation embarks on that philanthropic enterprise, I am sure that the purse-strings of my hon. Colleague will be loosened."

Mr. Sami Venkatachalam Chettiyar:—"Pending that, may I ask whether the Government will suspend the prosecution of these beggars?"

The hon. Mr. C. P. Ramaswami Ayyar:—"It was in response to a number of appeals published in the newspapers that this was a tremendous nuisance that the system of prosecutions was inaugurated."